

# 2003 Report of Accomplishments

## Kittitas County Conservation District



### Natural Resource Improvements in 2003 - Summary

- Converted the irrigation system on 300 acres from rill (furrow) to sprinklers by installing three linear move systems. The conversion resulted in 1.0 cubic feet per second of the dedicated to Caribou Creek for 10 years.
- Enclosed 1,500 feet of the Bull Canal in pipe. Wilson Creek will benefit from the 1.2 cubic feet per second of water for 10 years.
- Conserved nearly 9,800 tons of soil on 1928 acres through the application of polyacrylamide (PAM).
- Assessed fish habitat and inventoried barriers on 40 miles of stream in the Kittitas Valley.
- Published 3,000 copies of the Rural Living Handbook to provide basic land management information to new landowners.



Linear move sprinkler system installed as part of the first Irrigation Efficiencies contract in the state.

### Mission of the Kittitas County Conservation District

- Provide leadership and technical assistance to landowners/operators in their management of natural resources.

### Water Quality Implementation

- See Local Funding below for the results of the PAM cost share activities. Water Quality Implementation funds utilized for cost share reached nearly \$3,000 (included in the total paid to landowners).
- One hundred and sixty five GIS farm plan maps were provided to landowners for their use in conservation planning.
- KCCD designed a gated pipe system to prevent the movement of sediment and bacteria into the irrigation water downslope of a feedlot. Approximately \$4,000 was spent on the equipment and supplies needed to install the practice. Practice installation will occur in the fall of 2003.

### Basic Funding

- Basic funding was used to support district operations, including administrative, managerial and training functions.

### Local Funding

- The Kittitas County PAM Cost Share Program has resulted in thousands of tons of soil saved since the 1999 irrigation season. This program matches funds from the landowner, Kittitas County Public Works and the Conservation Commission through the implementation grants. Below are the results of the first four seasons of this program. Number of applications per year is between 15 and 20. Cost share is at 50% with a \$1,000 per landowner cap.

	Acres Enrolled	Estimated Tons of Soil Saved	Cost Share Paid to Landowners
1999	933	1,314	\$ 1,852
2000	1,566	7,562	\$ 7,562
2001	2,737	12,418	\$ 7,327
2002	1,928	9,774	\$ 6,255

### Irrigation Efficiencies

- Converted 300 acres of rill irrigated cropland to sprinkler irrigation systems by installing 3 linear move sprinklers. It resulted in 1 cubic foot per second of water in Caribou Creek dedicated to the Water Trust for ten years. The contract was for 85% cost share and \$413,125 (maximum contract allowable), the total project cost was \$530,000.
- Enclosed 1,500 feet of Bull Canal in a pipe, saving 1.2 cubic feet per second of water. That saved water was dedicated to Wilson Creek for 10 years. The contract was for 85% cost share and \$262,000. The total project cost was \$301,000.

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## **Watershed Conservation/Habitat Restoration**

- KCCD staff completed 40 miles of stream assessment in the Kittitas Valley as part of the Yakima Tributary Access and Habitat Program. The assessments included collecting data on the quality of fish habitat available and inventorying all barriers to fish passage. Funding for this project is from the Bonneville Power Administration through the South Central RC&D.
- In support of the Teanaway Temperature TMDL and the Upper Yakima River Suspended Sediment TMDL, KCCD staff sampled the water at 11 sites on the mainstem Teanaway, all three forks of the Teanaway and 4 small tributaries of the North Fork. Parameters include temperature, suspended sediment, turbidity and discharge.

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## **Small Farm Programs**

- KCCD small farm assistance focused on the distribution of the Rural Living Handbook, which was published in January 2003. Three thousand copies were produced at a cost of \$4,100. The publication was funded by an EPA 319 Grant through the Department of Ecology and is aimed at new rural landowners.

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## **Community Collaboration & Coordination**

- KCCD staff were invited to work with the Manastash Steering Committee on the Manastash Restoration Project. This project resulted from the listing of summer steelhead in the mid-Columbia, water right holders desire to correct screening and passage issues and a draft letter of intent to sue from the Washington Environmental Council (WEC). The Manastash Steering Committee successfully lobbied the Governor and the Legislature for funding to implement Phase I. They requested assistance from the KCCD in managing and administering those funds.
- KCCD staff met with the Teanaway Citizens Committee regarding the "Reduce Temperatures in the Teanaway" project. This project was initiated by the Citizens Committee, consisting of approximately a dozen members, most of whom are landowners in the Teanaway River valley.

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## **Information & Education**

- Hosted or attended the KCCD Annual Grower Meeting; CAFO meeting, with Joe Harrison (WSU Extension); KCCD Annual Meeting; Kittitas County Hay Grower's Conference; and Kern Company Grower Meeting. Attendance at all of those meetings was 318.
- KCCD booth at the Kittitas County Fair (attendance greater than 60,000 over five days), including live demonstrations of erosion control using PAM and soil moisture monitoring/irrigation scheduling using datalogging equipment.
- Operated one of several stations aimed at educating the 243 third grade students (and 37 parents) from the Kittitas, Thorp, and Ellensburg School Districts at the WSU Cooperative Extension Ag Day.
- The KCCD provided approximately \$900 to 4 classrooms to fund costs for agricultural related field trips, the Salmon Festival in Leavenworth, expenses for a bison ranch field trip, and converting a 9-acre horse pasture into a multi-educational park.
- KCCD published six newsletters with information about projects and available cost share and technical assistance. Circulation is 1,300.



KCCD's Mark Crowley talks to third graders from the Kittitas School District about the importance of soil to agriculture.

## **Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices**